



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

March 9, 2011

BOARD PRESENT: Amir, Bailey, Brodsky, Bryant, Dickerson, Lewis, O., Neuman, Riccardi, Watts

STAFF PRESENT: Parker Hamilton, Director; Barbara Webb, Chief, Collection and Technology Management; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Frank Joseph, Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc.

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Brodsky at 7:10 p.m.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes from the February 9, 2011 meeting were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

David Chiles has resigned from the Library Board due to health reasons.

There are three (3) vacancies on the Board. These vacancies will be advertised as soon as possible.

Page 2-3 of the February 9, 2011 minutes clarify the relationship between the Board and the LACs. The wording is great and extremely helpful; it will go into the public record and anyone who needs clarification will know where to find it.

A Library Potluck to which the Council members have been invited is scheduled for April 6 at 6:00 p.m. at the Council Office Building prior to the public hearing.

PRESENTATION:

E-books and Other Trends – Barbara Webb

Interesting Facts and Statistics:

- There are more cell phones than toilets in the world.
- There were 255M websites as of December 2010; 21.4M were added in 2010.
- Facebook began 2010 with 350M users and ended the year with 600M. Seventy percent of Facebook's user-base is located outside the United States.
- MIT futurist, Nicholas Negroponte, predicts that the physical, paper-based book is dying rapidly and will soon be replaced as the dominant form within five years.
- Borders has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. As part of its turn around plan, it will close

approximately 30% of its current store base within the next several weeks including its store in White Flint Mall.

- Barnes and Noble will resume its store relocation program and is considering moving into a handful of Borders stores that are closing.
- Sales of e-books through BN.com are more than double that of sales of all print books.
- Barnes and Noble forecasts that the consumer book market will grow from \$23B in 2010 to \$27B in 2013, with all the growth coming from e-book sales.
- Barnes and Noble estimates that they have approximately 25% of the e-book market.
- Barnes and Noble will close six to ten stores annually over the next three years as leases expire.
- Amazon's total sales were up 40% to \$34.2B.
- Kindle books have now taken over the paperback as the most popular type of book sold on Amazon.com even as the sale of paperbacks rose. Since the beginning of the year, for every 100 paperbacks sold, there were 115 Kindle books sold.
- The Kindle store now has 810K books with more than 670K priced at \$9.99 or less.
- There is probably no better example of the changes looming over publishing than the rise of the app and the transformation of children's publishing from static pictures and prose to dynamic interactive media content.
- A conference held in January brought together four publishers at the forefront of combining technology and content who are creating a new form of book that combines video and text in a software package that is continually updated.
- One of the "12 Technologies on the Brink of Disappearing" is the e-book reader. This is because it can only do one thing. More people will be downloading books to their iPads and cell phones.
- Barnes and Noble had software to track the number of Nooks they sold at Christmas, but they sold so many the program crashed.
- Overdrive, the primary vendor of e-books for libraries, expected a 25% increase in business after this last Christmas. They had a 200% increase, and they crashed.

Discussion and Questions:

- With the new apps in children's publishing, some children may not be able to use them to learn how to read.
- There are digital games and interactive books that teach children reading skills.
- Question: How does Libraries respond to the changing technology and to build a collection or not?

Answer: Some of it we can respond to and some of it we cannot. We can respond by having e-books. We are building our e-library collection. Our overall circulation is down 16%; e-library circulation is up 35%. E-books are less than one percent of the circulation.

- Libraries has one basic e-book platform and that is Overdrive. Most of the library systems in Maryland belong to a consortium that shares the e-books from the Overdrive platform.
- Overdrive has added the Advantage Program from which MCPL has purchased additional titles and copies that are in high demand that can only be checked out by MCPL customers.
- MCPL joined the Advantage Program last month with an investment of approximately \$55K.
- An e-book costs about what MCPL pays for a hardback book (retail). MCPL gets a 40% discount on most hardback books.
- E-books do not get lost, they do not get stolen, they do not get damaged, and they do not get lost in transit.
- There are also a number of online resources available. Many more reference books are becoming available online.

- MCPL is not buying a lot of computer books this year, but there are thousands of titles of computer books on sites such as Safari that can be read online (cannot be downloaded).
- MCPL is getting rid of many things that used to be purchased in print and making the online resources available.
- Libraries' webpage links to all this content with instructions on how to download. The download process is not easy.
- Harper Collins announced last week that it was going to limit to 26 the number of times an e-book can be loaned in Overdrive, then it will disappear.
- Question: What's the benefit to Harper Collins in doing this?
Answer: The libraries will buy more copies. In essence, the original copies would be available for use forever. Harper Collins feels that at the end of 26 circs, if this were a paperback it would be worn out. At the end of 26 circs, they would sell it to the library systems at the paperback price.
- Some libraries are planning to boycott Harper Collins. ALA has formed two task forces to discuss this.
- Harper Collins is third in print and second in e-books.
- MCPL should not punish customers by not buying Harper Collins titles, but watch how this plays out and hope for a new negotiation at a higher circ number than 26.
- There is a company that is digitizing out-of-print books. Most are genealogical and brittle books that no longer physically circulate. As an author, it is very difficult to convince Google and this group not to scan your book(s). Authors have to be proactive. There is a lawsuit against Google concerning this practice.
- *Discussion regarding the length of copyrights. US copyright is so long; one hundred years after the author's death.*
- Sarah Rosenblum, a librarian from Hennepin County in Minnesota, said that in 2010 their library system spent \$35K on e-books. In 2011, they will spend \$350K of their \$8M materials budget.
- MCPL spends about \$30K on e-books not counting Safari and reference books (online).
- Libraries have never been the primary customers of publishers. Many publishers still think we buy one book and circulate it throughout the country.
- Two major publishers, MacMillan and Simon and Schuster, do not release their e-books to Overdrive.
- Not all library systems are part of the Consortium, some join Overdrive independently.
- There are no major purveyors of e-books to libraries other than Overdrive.
- MCPL also has Netlibrary, but those are all audiobooks.
- Question: What devices work with our e-books?
Answer: Nook, Sony Reader, iPad and iPod.
- Virtual Services has made every effort to simplify the download process for customers.
- E-books are just like print books, if we have four copies, only four copies can be checked out.
- Customers may only have four e-books checked out at one time.
- The Board advises the Director on the collection and the collection development policies. Based on the information provided by Barbara Webb, Director Hamilton asked for feedback from the Board.
 - It may not make sense for public institutions to rent information this way. When you buy a physical book, you have use of it until it wears out. No one is going to come and take it away from you. The e-book server is a big electricity spawning place. It is for profit. Personally, I feel uncomfortable that we are putting our human heritage into the hands of corporations who do not have our best interest at heart. [Paulette Dickerson]

- This process is moving more slowly in the public school system due to equity. The public school system cannot supply every student with a laptop let alone e-readers. It seems that technology is moving to create a device that will make the process seamless. [Gail Bailey]
- If we do not keep up with what schools are doing, how much more of a disconnect will this cause? [Robyn Watts]
- E-books cannot be loaned to a friend, and they have wiped out the first sale doctrine. [Art Brodsky]
- Only people who have money or access to really inexpensive e-readers will be able to utilize this resource.
- An e-book can be downloaded to a smartphone and almost everyone has a smartphone.
- The FOL is looking into e-books and how they will affect the bookstore and book sales.
- Question: Do you have four or five targets that you watch to track trends?
Answer: No, but that is a good idea.
- Question: Why are the prices for e-books the same as buying hardcopies at retail?
Answer: I don't know. The e-book in public libraries is all new (since 2004). We need to engage publishers and let them know how we use materials; keep up the dialogue and dispel some of the myths that publishers have regarding libraries.
- Director Hamilton asks Board members to go to MCPL's website and look at the instructions regarding downloading. They were also asked have conversations with their respective LACs regarding this.
- The Technology Survey was recently completed. The responses were fascinating.
- Barbara Webb will return to the April Library Board meeting to present the results from the Technology Survey.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

The **budget** is being worked on. Mr. Leggett will hold a press conference at noon on March 15 to announce his budget recommendations to the community. Board members were encouraged to attend if possible. Once Mr. Leggett announces his recommendations, Director Hamilton will send a document to the Board members via email that outlines Mr. Leggett's recommendations for Libraries. This document will include a link to the recommendations on the Office of Management and Budget's website.

The **Report to the Community** is included in the Board packets. This report is done every two years. Board members will let the LACs know that it is available online. There are limited print copies. Copies of the Report have been provided to State delegates, County Council members, County Executive Leggett and other stakeholders.

The new **Check Us Out** is now available online. There are limited print copies. The **Director's Report** for March has also been posted on the website.

Written testimony has been given to the State on their **Capital Improvement Project**. There is a \$5M fund for which requests can be made to help fund capital improvement projects. It is in danger of being cut by about 20%. They are also looking at putting a cap on the amount of money a system can receive per year. For example, if the cap is \$800K and MCPL asks for and receives \$800K, even if no other system requests money from the fund, MCPL cannot ask for any additional funds. Whatever remains in that pool of money would just sit there.

On Saturday, the Noyes Foundation will be in Annapolis giving testimony on their grant. They have asked for a \$50K bond grant from the State. Director Hamilton will provide written

testimony. If the Foundation is able to get the \$50K from the State, they will fundraise to match it. So it is possible that the Foundation can put \$100K towards renovating the Noyes Library. The Foundation has done a fantastic job with their fundraising. In addition, the Foundation has about \$90K for the operation side. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been signed. It is in the County Attorney's Office now. Once the County Attorney has signed it, it will be sent to Mr. Leggett for his signature. To their credit, the Foundation began fundraising before the MOA was signed. This is a good partnership.

Last night the County held the public hearing on the amendment to the **Urban Renewal Plan** in Silver Spring to allow the bridge to be considered. About ten individuals testified and all but one testified in favor of the bridge. Mr. Leventhal mentioned that Mr. Riemer put a question on his blog regarding the bridge and the majority of those who responded were against the bridge. The Silver Spring LAC is working on how to counter this without engaging in vicious virtual attacks. Tomorrow the Health and Human Services Committee will meet on this subject. They will vote whether or not to move forward. If they do vote to move forward, it will eventually go before the full Council. If the full Council votes to amend the Plan, once it is amended, then talks can begin regarding building the bridge and how it will be funded. This is why the \$5M CIP in the State becomes important. That is one place MCPL can go for assistance with funding for the bridge.

The wording provided by Connie Latham, County Executive's Office, has been added to the **LAC Handbook**. The cover has been revised; revision dates have been changed; information regarding the revision process, including the review by the County Attorney, has been added; and wording is included that states that the Library Board is one of many County Boards, Committees and Commissions under the umbrella of the County Executive's office and as such must follow the County codes and guidelines. The revision process began in 2005.

Discussion was held about changes that were made to the Handbook since the February Board meeting. One change (page 8) was that a definite time range (ten business days) was added to the section regarding the LAC meeting minutes.

Question: When we have a rule, what happens if the rule is not followed?

Answer: The liaisons and Agency Managers should remind the LACs about the processes. We need to know when the LACs meet. In the Handbook, it states that the LACs should have a calendar of scheduled meetings.

Calendars of LAC meetings need to be collected. Submission of LAC meeting minutes should be tracked. The liaisons should explain this at the next LAC meetings. The LAC chairs and managers will be sent an email letting them know that the LAC Handbook is posted on the website. The liaisons will also reiterate this at their next LAC meetings.

It was moved and seconded that the revised LAC Handbook be accepted and posted on the Internet.

OLD BUSINESS:

LAC Relations

A letter written by the chair of the Aspen Hill LAC and president of the Aspen Hill FOL Chapter was sent to the County Executive and copied to state delegates and the County Council. The letter expressed concern regarding Libraries budget and included a recommendation that the materials/collection budget be cut. The Board has discussed over and over the plan to advocate

for the budget. It was repeatedly said, “Libraries matter; no more cuts.” What happens when one of the LACs goes out on its own and states that it is okay to cut the materials budget? It has to be reinforced to the LACs that they are subcommittees of the Library Board and their positions should reflect those of the Board.

Discussion regarding how to deal with LACs that do not follow the rules. The Board must have a way to defuse LACs that have their own agenda. Richard Bryant, liaison for the Aspen Hill LAC, will reinforce the LACs status as a subcommittee of the Board and the guidelines expressed in the Handbook. As individuals, it is fine to express their opinions, but not while representing the LAC.

Question: There are a number of LACs who have had the same leadership for an extended period of time. Is the Board allowed to remove an LAC chair or disband an LAC?

Answer: These are questions that will be posed to the County Attorney via Connie Latham.

The tenure of the chair is a gray area in the Handbook. This should be reviewed. If an LAC chair remains in that position for years, this drives members away. The chair term for the LACs should mirror that of the Board.

LAC INFORMATION/LAC UPDATES:

Board and LAC Activities Committee (J. Lewis, Neuman, Riccardi, Sheriff-Merchant)

LAC Awards Committee will meet in the next few weeks to finalize the revised application; the application will be streamlined. The liaisons will discuss with the LACs if they would like to continue having the awards. It was decided that there would be only two awards this year, the Ablard Award and the LAC Member of the Year Award. The liaisons with the Agency Managers and LAC Chairs will be the nominators.

The Committee will also discuss how to get the LACs energized.

Legislative and Public Affairs Committee

Otto Lewis received a call from Ari Brooks, Executive Director for the FOL, stating that the FOL has scheduled meetings with at least four of the County Council members. Board members will attend the meetings with the FOL. LAC members will also be asked to attend the meetings.

March 21 at 11:00 a.m. – Craig Rice

March 21 at 12:30 p.m. – Valerie Ervin’s representative

March 22 at 12:30 p.m. – George Leventhal

March 22 at 1:15 p.m. – Nancy Navarro’s representative

Discussion was held regarding why the process of scheduling the meetings was different this year. Meetings will be scheduled with the remaining Council members.

Otto Lewis attended **Legislative Day** in Annapolis along with MCPL staff Kay Bowman and Joseph Eagan. Former Chief Administrative Officer Bruce Romer also attended on behalf of Libraries.

There have been many good stories regarding Libraries in the ***Gazette***. LACs should send reports of their activities to Art Brodsky who will contact the appropriate *Gazette* editor.

Germantown LAC is sending post cards. The count will be sent when it is known.

Lois Neuman is involved with a **mystery writers' association** that is interested in what is going on with Libraries. She will send the talking points to the mystery writers who want to get involved. One mystery writer is a member of an LAC.

Potomac Library has a new walkway. The original walkway was made of pavers that were not in place; a new border was put around them which made them sturdier. The walkway was enhanced by an upcounty landscaper who donated this as a community service project. A press release was sent out regarding this.

Question: There is talk about branches closing; is this a rumor?

Answer: There was no discussion regarding the closing of branches.

The Bethesda FOL has agreed to host a forum sponsored by the Kettering Foundation. Please contact Otto Lewis for more information on the forums.

Question: Should LAC reports be submitted verbally or electronically to be included in the minutes?

Answer: Brief verbal LAC updates are welcome.

Germantown LAC is trying to reorganize, but is having a difficult time getting members.

Poolesville LAC had an open mic night. People came and read poetry and had refreshments. They will have an event on Friday for the Branch Manager who will be leaving. They are working on their annual poster contest for which they won a Board award.

There is some confusion about the role of the LAC at Long Branch.

Discussion regarding LACs handling money and what branches without FOL chapters can do regarding fundraising and donations.

This is an opportunity to reinforce the message that the LACs are subcommittees of the Library Board, and LACs should not handle money. If someone wants to donate money to an LAC, they should work with Ari Brooks to determine how this should be handled.

LAC Applications

The LAC member nominations were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton, Director